

MOOSE LAURELS: NEW SPOONERISMS, PART 1

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Since childhood, I have indulged a perverse fascination with spoonerisms, chiasmus, and other forms of linguistic reversal. This passion culminated in the publication of my quasi-definitive book on transpositional humor, *Cruel and Unusual Puns* (Dell, 1991).

Unfortunately, writing the book failed to cure this quirky obsession, and I have compulsively persisted in creating new specimens. The one-liners that follow are all 100% original—I hope.

Massage instruction: A class of touch

Hamlet: Dane as play

Appealing hillbilly gal: Rube, cute

Omertà: An oral mobligation

Child rearing: You're either riled or cheering

Social climber: Class gleaner

Electrical engineer: Ohm honer

Best way to travel from Sodom to Gomorrah: "Some hike it"—Lot

BBC sitcom about a Cockney orthodontist who wins the lottery: *Luck by Strit'nin'*

Film about woman struggling to conceal her alcoholic husband: *The Hide 'Er Souse Rules*

Amiable tailor: "It's a measure to pleat you"

Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, after auditioning: Hired but tappy

Tarzan to complaining neighbors: "It's my cry and I'll party if I want to!"

Balkan cold snap: The chill of the Thrace

Detectives in pursuit of elusive phony doctor: "If it ducks like a quack...."

Most popular reading matter: Food labels and lewd fables

Dr. Victor Frankenstein, Inc.: "We Bring Good Life to Things"

Dracula, frustrated as his quarry escapes: "There's no a'tasting for Count!"

Why celebrities tolerate autograph hounds: A good fan is hard to mind

Medieval Movers: "One van, one moat"

Australian soldiers on alert: "But mate—there's war!"

Business owners' neurosis: The fear of wages

Michelangelo's chronic grade-school excuse: "The hog ate my homework"

Management wisdom: Don't change the channel; channel the change

Bull market: buy, hold, sell. Bear market: buy, sold, hell!

Danish Western movie: *Waking the Braves*

When we honor those courageous Saint Bernards: Hound Grog Day

The next best-selling sex manual: *Hail, More Moans!*

What you never want to encounter on the Channel Tunnel train: Bore de Calais

Mr. Crosby's overjoyed agent: "Glory to the new corn, Bing!"

Exaggerations traded by beer drinkers: Bock bluster

Determining the next fashion trend: Riddle of the mode

Mountain climbers' precaution: A check on the peak

Best pickup line during flu season: "Do you, um, hear coughin'?"

Rebuke by impatient astronomy professor: "Scotch the *why's*!"

Negotiating contracts over lunch: Dined and sated

Directions, pretentiousness pills: Fake, with 'tude

Malt liquor manufacturers' goal: Canning the kick

British weight-loss plan: *Those 'Ips! Those Lies!*

Cantankerous poetry critic: "I peg your bardin"

Detergent commercial: "On the verge of having dirty laundry? You may be a dinge brinker"

Counterculture reaction to stock market excesses: It is better to share your values than to value your shares

Bellicose ethnic warlords: First they spoil for a fight, then they fight for the spoils

Dickensian moral: It is better to be humble and grateful than grumble and hateful

Song favored by magicians' assistants: "The First Time Ever I Faced Your Saw"

Fetishists' theme: "What is This Love Called Thing?"

Little-known '60s erotic hit: "You've Got a Lovely Kind of Groove"

Jewish Christmas carol: "God Rest Ye, Jerry Mendelman"

Pitch for Carnival Cruise Lines: "When you have a grind to ax"

Club Med slogan: "Our stay is here to love"

Summer vacation: A change of pace from the pace of change

Reaction on return therefrom: "One sighs—it's fall"

But as fishermen characteristically exclaim: "Bait! It gets wetter!" In the next issue of *Word Ways*, I shall present examples that require more elaborate setups, such as shaggy-dog stories with spoonerized punchlines. Until then, I leave my royal leaders—er, loyal readers—with this profound thought: All puns are equal in the guise of odd.